

STATE OF MICHIGAN **DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION** LANSING

THOMAS D. WATKINS, JR SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

January 6, 2005

MEMORANDUM

TO:

State Board of Education

FROM:

Thomas D. Watkins, Jr., Chairmay

SUBJECT: Report on Universal Education Vision and Principles

On June 26, 2003, the State Board of Education (Board) directed the Superintendent to prepare a draft position paper, specifically a vision and principles, on universal education.

To meet this request, a referent group met over a period of six months, beginning January 2004, to develop the vision and principles. The draft position paper (Attachment A) includes:

- A vision statement regarding the education of all students, including diverse learners.
- Principles of universal education that support desired outcomes for all students.

The charge to the group included aligning the vision and principles with statutory requirements. A matrix that identifies related statutory and regulatory requirements was developed (Attachment B).

The referent group included a broad representation of stakeholders reflecting the many diverse populations of learners (Attachment C). The work of the referent group was supported through a structured dialogue process. A core team of Department staff from several offices provided technical support in order to complete the charge from the Board (Attachment D).

The vision and principles can be used as a framework for existing and related policies adopted by the Board, and as a basis to guide future actions and policy decisions to better meet the educational needs of all learners. The vision and principles provide a provocative view of the range of diverse learners and underscore sensitivity to the challenge of effective education for all students. This work supports the Board's strategic goal for helping all children and students achieve.

It is recommended that the State Board of Education accept the Report on Vision and Principles for Universal Education, as identified in the Superintendent's memorandum dated January 6, 2005 and disseminate for field review.

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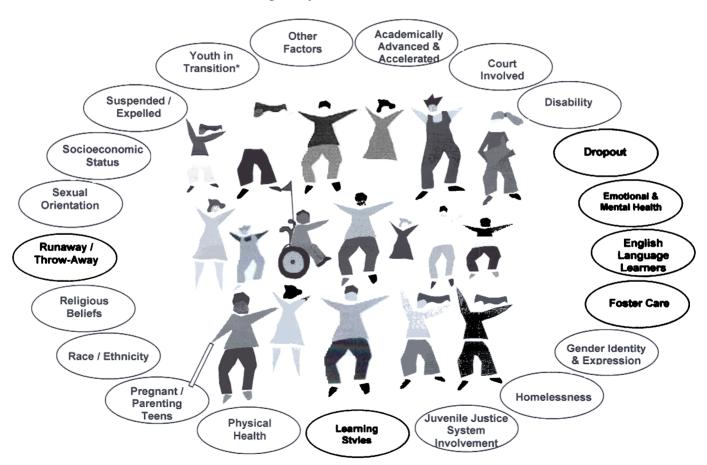
VISION OF UNIVERSAL EDUCATION

Every individual's success is important to our society. Each person deserves and needs a concerned, accepting educational community that values diversity and provides a comprehensive system of individual supports from birth to adulthood. Universal Education removes barriers, provides flexible and responsive supports and facilitates life-long learning for all.

The principles of Universal Education reflect the beliefs that in order to support the learning of all in achieving desired educational outcomes, there must be:

- → A learning community...
- ★ A learning environment (culture; resources)...
- ★ Adult and student learning...

Learners in all of their diversity come from a variety of backgrounds and life situations that may pose barriers to their access to, experience with, and progress in public education. The following graphic identifies some of those factors affecting today's learners from birth to adulthood.



^{*} Youth in transition are young people in temporary placements (i.e., awaiting foster care placement or institutional placement, staying temporarily with friends or relatives).

PRINCIPLES OF UNIVERSAL EDUCATION

The learning community

Universal Education...

- → Builds a community that values diversity among all stakeholders and students, birth through adulthood.
- ♦ Engages broad-based working partnerships in removing all barriers that interfere, impede and/or prohibit access to the full range of learning opportunities.
- * Recognizes and supports the critical, essential role that families/primary caregivers, in all of their diversity, play in the development and education of their children.
- → Necessitates involvement of a broad-base of stakeholders that influence public policy and practice:
 - State Board of Education
 - Educational organizations and associations
 - Executive branch of government
 - Teacher training and preservice institutions
 - Human service system
 Parent/teacher/student groups

- Advocacy groups and organizations
- Legislature
- Business and community organizations
- Corrections/juvenile justice system
- Other stakeholders

The learning environment (culture and resources). The culture...

Universal Education...

- ◆ Creates a safe and accepting learning environment in partnership with families and community characterized by mutual support, respect, and responsibility.
- → Is guided by a commitment to educational excellence, democracy and social justice (equity) to create a sense of belonging.
- ♦ Honors the rights of all students to learn together.
- → Supports and facilitates learning for all from birth through adulthood, including those who may be disenfranchised or marginalized, inhibiting in some way their achievement of individual education outcomes.

The resources...

Universal Education...

- ★ Assures access to resources and provides support for teachers and students.
- → Provides resources to create flexible instruction and learning environments designed for all learners, building on strengths, needs and interests.
- → Supports policies and practices to prevent learning problems stemming from physical, environmental, social, and emotional factors.
- → Promotes leadership among stakeholder groups that guides continuous instructional improvement.

Adult and student learning...

Universal Education...

- ★ Ensures effective educator pre-service and on-going professional development.
- → Implements effective, instructional practices, which align with individual learning styles, interests, and strengths moving the student from the edge of competence forward.
- → Uses student performance and growth data to design, implement, evaluate, and adjust instruction, school environment and professional development.
- → Ensures that students will be assessed based on growth in addition to broad, standardized tests or benchmarks of achievement.

Matrix of Selected Federal Statutes &/or Regulations Universal Education Referent Group (1/27/04)

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 $^{^{1}}$ GLBTQ = Gay / Lesbian / Bi-sexual / Transgender / Questioning

Matrix of Selected State Statutes &/or Regulations Universal Education Referent Group (1/27/04)

X = the population that has initial access to eligibility for services or protections under this law Shaded rows = clusters used in working definition of "learners" White rows = examples	MI State School Aid Act, Section 31a: At-Risk	Education for the Gifted and Talented	ersons with Disabilities Civil Rights Act	Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act	School Code	State School Aid Act	oublic Health Code	Critical Health Problems E ducation Act	MSD/B	MSD	MSB	Federal and State Aid to Vocational Education	Rehabilitation Act of 1964	Youth Employment Standards	Administrative Rules for Special Education	
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² GLBTQ = Gay / Lesbian / Bi-sexual / Transgender / Questioning